

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL ZAGREB

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3556

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY ROME

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SUBJECT: "BORBA" ALEGES INFRINGEMENT OF SLOVENE MINORITY RIGHTS
IN TRIESTE

1. IN FIRST DISCORDANT NOTE IN ITALIAN-YUGOSLAV RELATIONS WE
HAVE HEARD OR SEEN SINCE SIGNING OF AGREEMENT IN OSIMO NOVEMBER 10
WHICH FINALIZED TRIESTE BORDER, ARTICLE IN JANUARY 28 "BORBA"
CRITICIZES SLOWNESS OF SOME COMMUNITIES IN TRIESTE AREA TO RE-
COGNIZE SLOVENE MINORITY RIGHTS.

2. SPECIFIC COMPLAINT RAISED BY "BORBA" ARTICLE IS STATUS OF
USE OF SLOVENE LANGUAGE IN LOCAL ELECTORAL BODIES. AUTHOR
(JURE PENGOV) NOTES THAT IN SEVEN OUT OF TEN COMMUNITIES IN
BORDER PROVINCES OF TRIESTE AND GORICA THE RIGHT OF THE SLOVENE
MINORITY TO USE THEIR OWN LANGUAGE HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED FOR
NEARLY 30 YEARS. HOWEVER, IN COMMUNAL ASSEMBLIES OF TRIESTE
AND GORICA AND UDINE REGIONAL PARLIAMENT, RIGHT IS DENIED.
AUTHOR CLAIMS "ITALIAN AUTHORITIES ARE AGAINST USE OF SLOVENE
LANGUAGE IN TRIESTE AND GORICA BECAUSE IT IS PRECISELY IN
THESE CITIES THAT THERE ARE FOUND THE LARGEST NUMBER OF SLOVENES."

3. ARTICLE GOES ON TO RELATE THAT MORE THAN A YEAR AGO, FOLLOWING
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AN ATTEMPT BY A MINORITY REPRESENTATIVE TO SPEAK SLOVENE IN

TRIESTE COMMUNAL ASSEMBLY, MAYOR OF TRIESTE SOUGHT OPINION OF ROME AS TO WHETHER THIS PRACTICE SHOULD BE PERMITTED. DESPITE ROME'S PROMISE TO RENDER PROMPT OPINION, REPLY TOOK MORE THAN ONE YEAR TO COME AND, CHARACTERISTICALLY, ARRIVED AFTER OSIMO AGREEMENT HAD BEEN SIGNED. REPLY, IN EFFECT, FORBIDS USE OF LANGARGE OTHER THAN ITALIAN BUT LEFT OPEN POSSIBILITY THAT LOCAL AUTHORITIES COULD ADOPT MORE FLEXIBLE POSITION IF LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES SO WARRANTED.

4. THE LATEST FAST PLAY WITH MINORITY RIGHTS, ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE, OCCURRED SEVERAL DAYS AGO WHEN A SLOVENE REPRESENTATIVE AGAIN ATTEMPTED TO SPEAK HIS MOTHER TONGUE IN THE TRIESTE COMMUNAL ASSEMBLY. THE MAYOR FORBADE HIM THE USE OF SLOVENIAN, SAYING HE COULD NOT PERMIT THIS UNLESS THE RIGHT WERE EXPRESSLY PROVIDED FOR IN ITALIAN LAW. KAISER

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